



March 2026

Proudly serving the members of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation

Albemarle Sounds

is published monthly by

Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  The power of human connections®

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Albemarle EMC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Basketball Camp Scholarships to be Awarded

Many young basketball players dream of playing under the bright lights of a college arena, showcasing their skills on the hardwood. Albemarle EMC is helping make that dream a reality for two lucky students by once again partnering with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and N.C. State University.

Through the Cooperative All-Stars Sports Camp Scholarship program, Albemarle EMC will provide one young woman with a scholarship to attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at N.C. State which will be held June 14-17. Young men can apply for a scholarship to attend the Carolina Basketball School which will be held June 27-30 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The scholarships cover all expenses at the overnight camps, which provide a glimpse into life on a college campus. Campers stay overnight in dorms, learn fundamental skills that will help them excel on and off the court and receive individual and group instruction from Division 1 coaches to enhance their basketball and team-building abilities.

To apply, students must complete and submit the online application by March 31. To apply, visit <https://www.ncelectriccooperatives.com/community/sports-camps/>. Eligible applicants must be in sixth or seventh grade during the 2026-2027 school year.

"Over the years in coaching and watching talent develop, I have found that athletic skill and potential are not bound by where you live, where you go to school, or your background," said NC State University Women's Basketball Coach Wes Moore. "Because of this partnership with North Carolina's electric cooperatives, we can help kids from all over the state attend our camp and discover their true potential on and off the court."

More than 50 students will be awarded Cooperative All-Stars Sports Camp Scholarships from electric cooperatives in North Carolina. Now in its 23rd year, the scholarship program demonstrates the electric cooperatives' commitment to building a brighter future through continued support for education and community programs.



Applications accepted through March 31, 2026

Directors Earn Certificates



Congratulations to the following Albemarle EMC Board of Directors members, who recently earned their Board Leadership Certificates. From left are: Robbie Whitehead, Linda Felton and Ray Albertson.

Albemarle EMC to Serve New Subdivision

Editor's note: This article is intended for informational purposes. As with any purchase, prospective buyers should do their due diligence.



Robert Leonardo is the developer and mortgage broker of the Hampton Roads Subdivision, which is under construction in Winfall.

Albemarle EMC will serve a new subdivision, located in Perquimans County.

The Hampton Roads Subdivision is currently under construction in Winfall, off of Winfall Boulevard adjacent to Perquimans Central School.

Robert Leonardo, developer of the Hampton Roads Subdivision, said the first home should be completed by early spring of this year.

Leonardo is also serving as the mortgage broker for the homes under construction. His intent is to enable new home buyers to purchase a home with as little up-front cost as possible. Depending on certain criteria, some prospective buyers may qualify for Veteran's Assistance

or a U.S. Department of Agriculture program that enables the purchase of homes for no money down, he said. The sales price on the homes will be \$400,000. Leonardo said he will be offering 30-year mortgages with a fixed 5.5 percent interest rate. The annual percentage rate will be 5.78 percent. Buyers, who qualify for no-money down, will be able to move into the homes with a monthly payment of \$2,860. The monthly payment will include taxes, insurance, home owner's association fees and trash service, he said.

"My goal is to build a family-oriented community in the quiet town of Winfall, where home ownership is achieved for a monthly payment that is equivalent to rent," Leonardo said.

The subdivision will have 17 homes as well as five duplexes, which will also be for sale.

"The duplex units will sell for less and be an option for those who can't afford the single-family option," he said.

Each home will sit on lots of about one-half acre in size. The three-bedroom, two bath homes are built with 2x6 exterior walls and will have 2-car garages. They have open-plan kitchen living rooms. Features also include tankless water heaters, heat pumps, granite countertops, ceiling fans in each room, soft-close cabinets and solid oak front doors. All of the kitchen appliances will be included. Buyers will have the option of electric or gas stoves.

United Country Homes will be serving as the real estate agency for the homes and can be reached at 252-426-1380.

Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

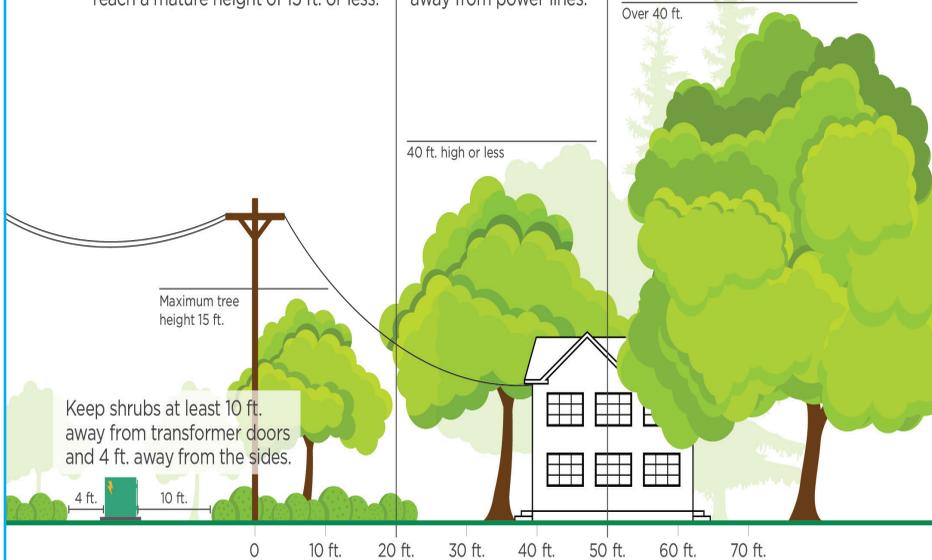
MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.

Over 40 ft.



Help Support AEMC Golf Tournament



The 18th Annual Albemarle EMC Light Up Christmas Golf Tournament will be held Friday, May 1.

If you would like to enter a team, purchase a hole sign or donate, please contact Chris Powell at chris.powell@aemc.coop or 252-426-2586. The entry and prize donation deadline is April 27. Funds raised at the tournament will go to support the co-op's Light Up Christmas toy drive. Since its inception, the fundraiser has raised more than \$303,000.



Albemarle EMC is at Your Service

Smaller Home Bigger Efficiency

by Chris Powell, director of public relations

For a long time, cheaply built, large homes dubbed 'McMansions' dominated the single-family residential construction industry. However, that trend appears to be changing.

What is slowly emerging in the residential construction industry is a return to well-built smaller homes. In a way, it is the return of what was. In 1950, the average home was 983 square feet. By the early 2000s, the average square foot of a home shot up to 2,349 square feet. That increase in home size was due to a confluence of lower cost labor, affordable building materials and low interest rates.

Now, we are in a different building environment. Labor is more expensive, some building materials are less affordable and interest rates are pushing mortgage payments beyond what many can afford. The reaction to these trends is a gradual movement back to smaller, energy efficient homes.

The energy efficiency of a well-designed small home will always outperform a large home because there is less space to heat and cool. But that's just the beginning. If I was going to design a highly efficient smaller home, there are aspects it would have and, just as importantly, not have.

First, the house would be less than 2,000 square feet in size and oriented to take advantage of the sun in the winter to allow for passive solar gain through windows. In the summer, window blinds and shade trees would be used to block the solar gain. The house would be built with 2x6 exterior walls insulated with spray foam insulation for a tight outer envelope. If I was going for a super-efficient envelope and cost wasn't an issue, I would utilize insulated concrete form

construction, which is Styrofoam forms filled with concrete.

Rather than vaulted or high ceilings, I would have the house built with standard 8-foot tall ceilings throughout the house. Because hot air rises, more heat would be able to reach the thermostat, causing the heating system to run less. The ceilings would have no recessed lighting. Recessed can lights are notorious for air leaks that create a chimney effect for hot air.

Heating and cooling systems are the single biggest users of electricity in a home. As such, the house would be heated and cooled with either a



geothermal heat pump system or a minisplit heat pump system. Though both systems are extremely efficient, I would likely opt for a minisplit system. Minisplits have several advantages over traditional central air duct systems. One of the biggest advantages is they use no ductwork, which leaks conditioned air. Instead of ductwork, the minisplit's compressor circulates a liquid solution through insulated pipes directly to an air-blowing unit, called a head, located on interior walls inside the home. Minisplits can either cool or heat. Also, because minisplit heads are located throughout the house, each room can be operated independently. For example, a person could heat or cool only their bedroom at night and leave the units off for the rooms in the

rest of the house. A final benefit is that a home's minisplit typically has more than one outside compressor, so if one breaks down, the homeowner can still heat other rooms in the house.

The second largest user of electricity in a home is the water heater. I prefer the super-efficient tank water heaters as opposed to tankless models. Water heaters with tanks naturally limit the length of a shower because the hot water in a tank runs out. These high-efficiency tank water heaters are effective due to better insulation and advanced heat exchangers. Heat pump water heaters, which also have tanks, work well; however, they must be located within the conditioned part of the house. The biggest drawback of tankless water heaters is they allow for limitless hot water, which can result in longer shower times, negating efficiency.

For storage, I would opt for a detached garage as opposed to an attached garage with a bonus room above it (also called a frog). Bonus rooms are typically the most difficult room in a house to heat and cool because it is surrounded by unconditioned spaces. The bonus room has the garage below and the attic above, making it a refrigerator in the winter and an oven in the summer. An added benefit of a detached garage is fumes from items such as gas cans, lawn mowers and car exhaust can't get into the home's living area.

What I have described is close to an ideal energy efficient home. Most home purchasers tend to prioritize lifestyle over efficiency. That said, incorporating just a few of the energy efficient features mentioned will lower your home's power usage.